September 11 tragedy and had a meeting with U.S. President George W. Bush on 12 September 2002.

(c) The two sides discussed ways to further strengthen bilateral relations and exchanged views on regional and international issues.

(d) The situation with regard to Iraq came up in the meeting between the Prime Minister and the U.S. President. The discussions did not relate to India's role therein.

(e) In New York, Prime Minister had publicly stated that India has vital strategic interests in Gulf and a large Indian diaspora lives and works in the region; India has had a historical relationship with Iraq; at the same time, we fully understand the international community's desire to see the relevant UN resolutions on Weapons of Mass Destruction complied with fully; and, that we believe that the sanctions against Iraq should be lifted in tandem with full and effective compliance by Iraq.

Debarring former Punjab Chief Minister from US visa

1700. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the U.S. Government has declared the former Punjab Chief Minister, Rajinder Kaur Bhattal to be permanently ineligible to receive a U.S. visa;

(b) if so, the facts and circumstances leading to the decision; and

(c) Government's reaction in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Government has seen the media reports in this regard. However, Government has received no official information from the US side on this matter.

(b) The U.S. law prohibits the disclosure of information in individual visa cases.

(c) Does not arise.

Terrorist training camps in Bangladesh

1701. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has handed over a list of 99 terrorist camps operating in Bangladesh where anti-Indian terrorists are trained;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Bangladesh Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to persuade the Government of Bangladesh to take effective action in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes.

(b) During the Director General-level talks between Border Security Force and Bangladesh Rifles held on 28 October to 2 November 2002 in New Delhi, Director General, BSF had handed over a list of 99 training camps of North East insurgents in Bangladesh to Director General, Bangladesh Rifles for taking action. Director General, Bangladesh Rifles reiterated that the Government of Bangladesh does not harbour nor provide support to any insurgent in any form to operate from Bangladesh against India. Both the Directors General agreed to cooperate fully in taking deterrent action against insurgents on their side so that tangible results are visible on the ground.

(c) The Government of India has been regularly taking up these security-related issues with Bangladesh at different levels through diplomatic channels and institutional mechanisms existing between the two countries. The Government would continue to engage Government of Bangladesh in this regard.

Regional dialogue with U.S.A.

1702. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and the United States have started a new regional dialogue on a wide range of issues;

(b) if so, whether the purpose of the dialogue was the U.S. role in Asia was expanding and India wanted more information about Washington's plans and what it was doing;

(c) whether India is satisfied with the talks held with U.S.; and